

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at p. 9, line 4, with the following amended paragraph:

Referring to FIG. 1B, there is illustrated a flow chart in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention comprising the operation of an inventory agent 300. ~~In~~ With reference also to Figure 1A, in a step (34), the inventory agent 300 receives an inventory-commence message, which term is used synonymously herein with AssetPulse 200, being a message attached to or embedded within a communication from a client computer 16. An AssetPulse 200 may be described as a message delivered by a client computer to a TD which instructs an inventory agent 300 loaded within the target device to commence an inventory. Furthermore, an AssetPulse 200 may itself contain an inventory agent 300 which may be loaded onto the TD. The AssetPulse 200 is forwarded through the client MHS 18 and is delivered to the inventory agents installed within the TDs 20 through 26. In a next step (36), the inventory agent 300 determines whether account and domain variables contained within the AssetPulse 200 equal that of the inventory agent 300. Account variables may be those identifiers created by the client. Domain variables may be identifiers unique to the data network address of the TD. If the variables do not match, the inventory action is terminated (38). If they do, the inventory agent 300 then detects computer software and hardware inventory associated with the TD (40). Such inventory may include an operating system, software, hardware, hard drive, motherboard, modem, monitor, or other software or hardware associated with the TD.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at p. 10, line 6, with the following amended paragraph:

Referring to FIG. 1C, and with reference also to Figure 1A, there is illustrated a block diagram of an AssetPulse 200 in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. An AssetPulse 200 may be executable code which serves as a catalyst to generate and return inventory data associated with a TD 20-26. The AssetPulse 200 comprises an identifier 210 for verifying the identity of an inventory agent 300 within a TD 20-26, an install catalyst 220 for initiating the download from the host unit 10 of an

inventory agent 300 if the TD is not equipped with same, and a trigger 230 for causing the inventory agent 300 to commence an inventory of its associated TD. In a preferred embodiment, a sequential pulse number 240 associated with a discrete client request is included to assist with tracking the time and other particulars of inventory data associated with a particular request. If no inventory agent 300 is installed within the TD upon receipt of the AssetPulse 200, the install catalyst 220 commences a protocol which will install an inventory agent 300 via download from the host unit 10. Prior to download, the operating system of the TD may demand verification of the attempt to download an inventory agent 300 from the host unit 10. If no verification is required, then the inventory agent 300 is downloaded from the host unit 10. If the operating system demands verification that the attempted download is from an authentic source and not, for example, a virus, then a verification certificate will be displayed. In the case of multiple operating systems such as, for example, Windows 2000, Windows 98, Windows 95, WindowsNT (trademarks or registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation), the TD user would be shown, for example, a "Certificate of Authenticity" from Verisign (trademark of Verisign, Inc.), or other third party verification agency.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at p. 11, line 8, with the following amended paragraph:

Referring to FIG. 2, and with reference also to Figure 1A, there is illustrated a flow chart in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention comprising a step (50) wherein a client computer 16 establishes via a data network 28 a membership on a host unit 10 accessible to a host MHS 14. A next step (52) follows wherein the client computer 16 establishes at least one account with the host unit 10, where an account may be an exclusive grouping of data relating to the software, hardware, and other assets associated with a particular TD 20-26 that subscribes to a client MHS 18.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at p. 12, line 12, with the following amended paragraph:

FIGS. 3A, 3B and 3C are a flowchart which illustrates a method of component audit and inventory management in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. With reference also to Figure 1A, in a step (100), the client computer 16 requests the commencement of an inventory action from the host unit 10. This step occurs once the account creation process, shown in FIG. 2, has been completed. The client's request may be by any means of electronic, or other communication, but typically such a request will be by way of an e-mail through the Client MHS 18.